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**MULTIPLE TYPES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL
CONTRACTS:
A SIX-CLUSTER SOLUTION**

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The purpose of this study is to empirically examine the existence of particular types of psychological contracts. We take a feature-oriented approach towards psychological contracts, which allows more generalizability across settings than content-oriented assessments. In defining the types of psychological contracts, we rely on 10 dimensions that indicate the employees' expected entitlements as well as their expected obligations towards their employer. We assess the existence of types of psychological contracts based upon an economy-wide, representative sample. The analysis indicates the existence of six types of psychological contracts, all having different patterns of mutual expectations: an instrumental psychological contract, a weak psychological contract, a loyal psychological contract, an unattached psychological contract, an investing psychological contract and a strong psychological contract. Based on the profiles of the six types and its number of respondents, we conclude that the so-called transformation from traditional employment relationships towards 'new deals' is restricted to a very small group of young and highly educated professionals and managers.

INTRODUCTION

Within the literature on psychological contracts, a lot of attention is given to the discussion of typologies of psychological contracts. The purpose of empirical studies was often to identify different types of psychological contracts (e.g., Rousseau, 1990; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994). However, the developed typologies and factor structures didn't seem to be particularly stable when cross-validated on another population (Barksdale & Shore, 1995). The reason seems to lie in the content-oriented approach to psychological contracts by which actual terms or composites of terms are being used as indicators for a particular type. Future research is therefore advised to take a feature-oriented approach to psychological contracts or to develop appropriate measurement models for holistic assessment of contract content (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998).

The purpose of this study is to empirically examine the existence of multiple types of psychological contracts. Its contribution is three-fold. First, we take a feature-oriented approach towards psychological contracts, which allows more generalizability across settings than content-oriented assessments (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Second, in defining the types of psychological contracts, we rely on 10 dimensions instead of only 2 dimensions. These dimensions further indicate the employees' expected entitlements as well as their expected obligations towards their employer. Third, we assess the existence of types of psychological contracts based upon a large, representative sample that cover economy-wide different categories of employees.

Because there are so many variations of the concept of psychological contracts and its operationalization, we first indicate how we defined psychological contracts together with its underlying dimensions. We then discuss the existing literature on types of psychological contracts. We identify two models of types of psychological contracts that are based on underlying dimensions: the model of Rousseau (1995) and Shore and Barksdale (1998). These models however rely only on two dimensions and may therefore overlook other types of psychological contracts. Besides these two theoretical models, we further rely on the recent discussion of the shift from an 'old' to a 'new' psychological contract (e.g., Kissler, 1994; Hiltrop, 1995; Hall & Moss, 1998; Cavanaugh & Noe, 1999). This discussion implicitly incorporates the idea of a typology of psychological contracts, namely an 'old' versus a 'new' type. The discussion by Hiltrop (1995) offers several dimensions but all dimensions are categorized in two bipolar categories, which again reduces the variety of different types. We conclude the theoretical section by summarizing the aim of this study, namely to explore multiple types of psychological contracts and

their profile. The types of psychological contracts are identified based upon a cluster analysis on a large, representative sample. Because of the empirical basis of the types of psychological contracts, we discuss the sample of this study more in detail and present a profile for each cluster based upon individual, job, formal contract and organizational characteristics.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Psychological Contracts and its Underlying Dimensions

Relying on McLean Parks and colleagues, we define the psychological contract between an employer and an employee as "the idiosyncratic set of reciprocal *expectations* held by employees concerning their *obligations* (what they will do for the employer) and their *entitlements* (what they expect to receive in return)" (McLean Parks, Kidder & Gallagher, 1998: 697). In taken an feature-oriented assessment of psychological contracts, we compare the contract to some attribute or dimension, such as the degree to which the contract is implicit/explicit or stable/unstable over time... its features are adjectives that characterize summary features of the contract and the ways in which it was conveyed or interpreted" (Rousseau and Tijoriwala, 1998; 685). The dimensions we include in this study are developed based upon the dimensions of time frame, tangibility, scope, stability, power distance and individualization. While the first four dimensions are adopted from the theoretical framework of Rousseau and McLean Parks (1993), the two latter ones are derived from reviewing the 13 nation-studies on psychological contracts (Rousseau & Schalk, 2000). Conform the definition of psychological contracts, each dimension was operationalized in terms of the individual's expectations concerning their entitlements as well as their expectations concerning their obligations.

When constructing reliable scales based upon factor analyses (Van den Brande, Sels, Janssens & Overlaet, 2000), 10 different dimensions were found. The dimension of time frame resulted in 'long term involvement' as expected entitlements and 'loyalty' as expected obligations. The term 'tangibility' was maintained for the expected entitlements regarding the tangibility dimension but relabeled as 'open attitude' to indicate the employees' expected obligations. Scope, as third dimension, resulted in the two scales of 'personal treatment' to refer to the employees' expected entitlements and of 'personal investment' to refer to the expected obligations. The fourth dimension, stability, split into 'carefulness regarding arrangements' for entitlements and 'flexibility' for the obligations. The newly added dimensions were power distance and individualization. Concerning power distance,

a reliable scale was constructed for expected entitlements, labeled 'equal treatment' but the items measuring the expected obligations didn't resulted in a reliable scale. The reverse holds for the dimension of individualization. A reliable scale was constructed for expected obligations, namely 'respect for authority,' but not for expected entitlements. The exact definition of these 10 dimensions as well as their reliability can be found in the method section.

Types of Psychological Contracts

Rousseau has been one of the first researchers to identify types of psychological contracts. In her early work, she and her colleagues (Rousseau, 1990; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994) attempted to construct the typology of transactional versus relational psychological contracts based upon empirical data. However, the factor structures that were derived in the different studies showed no stability. For instance, the items of training, career development, working extra hours and engage in voluntary extra-role activities were in the first study (Rousseau, 1990) interpreted as elements of a transactional psychological contract whereas in the second study (Robinson et al., 1994) they belonged to a relational psychological contract. The difficulty of finding types of psychological contracts stable across time and settings is mainly due to the way psychological contracts has been operationalized in these studies. The assessment of psychological contracts happened here in a content-oriented approach with analysis of terms or composites of terms. This type of conceptualization and operationalization is likely to lead to inconsistencies across samples (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998) and is the reason why we apply a feature oriented assessment of psychological contracts in this study.

Later, Rousseau (1995) theoretically identifies four types of psychological contracts based upon the dimensions of 'time frame' and 'tangibility': a transactional, a relational, a balanced or team player, and a transitional psychological contract. A *transactional psychological contract* is characterized by a short-term employment relationship (short-term time frame) in which the performance requirements or mutual obligations can be unambiguously specified (high tangibility). Rousseau (1995) expects in this type of psychological contract low ambiguity, low member commitment, easy exit/high turnover, freedom to enter new contracts, little learning and weak integration or identification. A typical illustration is seasonal work. This transactional contract is contrasted with a *relational psychological contract*. A relational contract is characterized by a long-term employment relationship (long-term time frame) in which the mutual obligations cannot be

unambiguously specified or in other words are ambiguous (low tangibility). An example is family business in which one expects a high member commitment, high affective commitment, high integration/identification and stability. A third type identified by Rousseau is the *balanced or team player psychological contract*. This type of contract has the high tangibility of a transactional psychological contract and the long-term time frame of a relational psychological contract. It is likely to be found in a high-involvement team with high member commitment, high integration/identification, ongoing development, mutual support and dynamic of nature. A fourth type is the *transitional psychological contract*. This type of contract is characterized by a short-term time frame and low tangibility. A high level of uncertainty and ambiguity, high turnover/termination and instability typifies such a psychological contract. Such a psychological contract is usually only temporary, found in companies undergoing radical organizational change such as a merger or takeover and will spontaneously result in a more transactional or even relational psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995).

A second theoretical framework on types of psychological contracts is offered by Shore and Barksdale (1998). With this model, Shore and Barksdale (1998) want to shift the focus from the content of the psychological contract, with the inherent problem that it is situation-bound, to more general characteristics of the psychological contract and they want to include the idea of a balance between employee obligations and employer obligations. They therefore use the two underlying dimensions of degree of balance in employee and employer obligations and the level of obligations. Both dimensions are derived from the social exchange theory put forward by Blau (1964). Following Blau, Shore and Barksdale (1998) see the psychological contract as balanced if the perceived obligations of the employee and those of the employer are at the same level. They define the level of obligation as the extent to which the employee and the employer feel obligated to fulfill a particular contract term. Four types of psychological contracts are identified on the basis of these two dimensions: mutual high obligations, mutual low obligations, employer over-obligation, and employee under-obligation. In case of *mutual high obligations*, the psychological contract is balanced and both parties have high obligations. According to Shore and Barksdale (1998) this type of psychological contract yields the best results in terms of the employees' affective involvement, their intention to stay or leave, their perception of their future with their organization and the perceived support that they receive from the organization. In contrast, a psychological contract of *mutual low obligations* is characterized by balance but with both parties having low obligations. Due

to the low perceived employee obligations, Shore and Barksdale (1998) argue that this type of psychological contract yields poorer results for the organization than the previous type. The two other types of contracts are not balanced. If the perceived employee obligations are high and the perceived employer obligations are low, the psychological contract is characterized by *employee over-obligation*. According to Shore and Barksdale (1998) psychological contracts that are not balanced occur less frequently and are only temporary. This hypothesis is once again based on Blau (1964), who states that a balance in exchange relationships can be expected, since the parties will automatically feel obliged to give something in return for what they receive. A fourth type is the psychological contract characterized by *employee under-obligation*. Unlike the previous type, in this type the employer is more obliged than the employee. Because of the unbalance and low employee obligations, this type of psychological contract yields the poorest results in terms of employees' affective involvement, their intentions to stay or leave, their perception of their future with their organization and the perceived support that they receive from the organization (Shore & Barksdale, 1998).

A third and final type of psychological contracts is the distinction between old versus new. During the past decade, this shift from an old to a new psychological contract has been put forward by several authors (e.g., Kissler, 1994; Hiltrop, 1995; Hall and Moss, 1998; Cavanaugh and Noe, 1999). Although the distinction is more based on intuition than on theory, we include this type of psychological contract because of the increasing attention it is given. We present here Hiltrop's description of the 'old' and the 'new' contract. He relies on some general dimensions of a psychological contract to contrast the old versus the new type. These dimensions are focus, format, duration, scope, underlying principle, intended output, employer's key responsibility, employee's key responsibility, employer's key input and employee's key input. The '*old*' psychological contract refers then to permanence, predictability, stability, fairness, mutual respect and tradition. The employment relationship takes on a long-term character and is expressed in aspects such as job security, long-term career opportunities and company-specific training programs which are offered to the employee in exchange for loyalty and commitment to the organization. The predictability of the old psychological contract is a direct consequence of the high degree of structure that is due to elements such as a clear organizational structure or the use of clear and detailed job descriptions. The contract is only slightly subject to internal or external changes, if at all. Finally, fairness and mutual respect characterize this type because employees must be rewarded with a good salary, status and job security for their

performance, for their loyalty to the organization and for the time and effort that they invest in the organization. In contrast, the '*new*' *psychological contract* is characterized by self reliance and employability rather than permanence, by ambiguity instead of clarity and predictability, by flexibility rather than stability, by recognition rather than fairness and mutual respect, and by market forces instead of tradition. Employees are responsible for their own career, and loyalty and commitment to the type of work replace loyalty and commitment to the employer. Employees themselves are responsible for their employability and therefore less dependent on their employer than in the case of the 'old' psychological contract. The lower predictability of the new psychological contract is a result of uncertainty, ambiguity and flexibility. Finally, recognizing employees means offering a job with responsibility, variety and autonomy instead of a good salary, status and job security. In exchange for an interesting job, employees offer their competences, creativity, innovative mind and entrepreneurial qualities rather than loyalty, time and effort as in the 'old' psychological contract.

Towards Profiles of Multiple Types of Psychological Contracts

The above overview indicates how research on types of psychological contracts seems to restrict the possibilities of a variety of types. The frameworks of Rousseau (1995) and (Shore & Barksdale, 1998) rely only on two dimensions leading to 4 types of contracts. Moreover, the types tend to be described in extreme forms. Each type is being identified based upon two extreme positions on each continuum. The typology of old versus new psychological contracts relies on several dimensions (Hiltrop, 1995) but the interpretation is restricted to a bipolar category. The aim of this study is to explore the existence of multiple types of psychological contracts based upon 10 dimensions. Finding a variety of psychological contracts is made further possible by the large, representative sample across industries and employee groups.

To better understand the different types of psychological contracts, we will develop profiles of each cluster based upon individual, job, formal contract and organizational characteristics. The interpretation of these profiles will be further based upon a framework of the dual society which distinguishes between individuals with a 'weak' or 'strong' position in society (Bral, 1997). The term 'dual society' refers to a society in which differences in incomes, in education and training, in living and home situations and in social opportunities always coincide. The 'weak' society includes those population groups with a lower income, a lower level of education, worse living and housing situations and

fewer opportunities in society. The ‘strong’ society, on the other hand, includes those population groups with a higher income, a higher level of education, better living and housing situations and more opportunities in society (Bral, 1997).

METHOD

Sample

The original population for this study consisted of all Belgian employees working in private, public, profit and non-profit organizations with at least 10 employees. We excluded agency workers, employees with ‘small’ part-time jobs (less than 40% of a full-time job), seasonal workers, trainees and apprentices.

A (disproportionally) stratified random sample was drawn, resulting in a realized sample of 1.106 employees. The stratification variables chosen were gender, age, sector of employment and the type of the employment relationship. The latter of these variables was included for stratification since there is no single dominant type of employment relationship in Belgium (Sels, Janssens, Van den Brande & Overlaet, 2000). One important distinction is the difference between contract and statute, as two different mechanisms of formalizing the employment relationship. In the private sector, the employment relationship is formalized in an employment *contract*. Employer and employee have the possibility of free negotiation with respect to the content of this contract. In the public sector, a *statute* regulates the relationship with the employer (i.e. the government). The content of this statute is unilaterally established by the government-employer. There is no question of ‘autonomous expression of will’, such as in the contractual relationship. A second distinction still very much present in the Belgian private sector is the difference between blue-collar workers, white-collar workers and executive levels. The employment contract receives a very different content depending whether you belong to the first, the second or the third group. Labor law treats these categories differently for issues such as protection from dismissal, salary arrangements, the probationary period, guaranteed income, annual vacation, etc. Inclusion of this distinction in our survey design allows us to fully investigate the relevance of differences in ‘formal contract’ for the nature and type of psychological contracts. In order to have sufficient data for analyses we needed to select larger samples from the strata with smaller populations (‘disproportional’), in casu from the ‘executive level’ stratum. The realized sample includes 326 blue-collar workers, 358 white-collar workers, 213 employees at executive level and 209 civil servants (employed by ‘statute’).

The data were collected using a standardized questionnaire. Respondents were interviewed by a total of 60 professional interviewers from a private research office. All interviewers were very experienced in conducting face-to-face interviews and received additional training from members of the research team. In order to minimize the risk of interpretation errors, we organized a briefing on the content of the questionnaire for each individual interviewer.

Measures

The purpose of this contribution is 1) to empirically examine the existence of multiple types of psychological contracts and 2) to describe the profile of each of these types in terms of individual, job, formal contract and organizational characteristics. We first describe the dimensions that are used to construct the types of psychological contracts. Subsequently we identify the variables used to profile the types.

Conform the definition of psychological contracts, items were developed that measured the individuals' expectations concerning their *entitlements* (I expect from my employer that...) as well as expectations concerning their *obligations* (My employer can expect from me that...). All 61 items were measured on five-point Likert-style response formats anchored by 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree'. Scales were formed after two principal component analyses with varimax-rotation to assess the dimensionality of the items. One analysis was conducted on the items measuring the employee's expected entitlements (I expect from my employer that...), and the second analysis on the items measuring the employer's expected obligations (my employer can expect from me that ...). Items with loadings above .40 and low cross-loadings were retained to construct scales (Hair, Tatham & Anderson, 1995). Internal consistency of the scales was assessed by calculating the Cronbach alpha coefficient.

The employee's expected entitlements. Principal component analyses with varimax-rotation on the 35 items measuring the employee's expectations about the obligations of his/her employer resulted in five factors or dimensions. The first dimension is named *long-term involvement*. This scale (seven items) assesses the employee's expected entitlements concerning a long term involvement by his/her employer ($\alpha=.82$). The second scale, *tangibility* (six items), measures the employee's expected entitlements regarding the clarity and transparency of his/her rights and obligations and the mutual arrangements in the context of the employment relationship ($\alpha=.86$). *Personal treatment*

is the third factor. This scale (five items) measures the extent to which the individual expects to be treated as a 'person' and not merely as an economic resource ($\alpha = .84$). The fourth factor is named *carefulness regarding arrangements*. This four-item scale refers to the extent to which the employee expects that his/her employer attends to earlier agreed arrangements ($\alpha = .70$). The fifth and last dimension, *equal treatment* (four items), assesses the employee's expected entitlements regarding equal treatment of all employees by the employer ($\alpha = .85$).

The employee's expected obligations. Principal component analyses with varimax-rotation on the 26 items measuring the individual's expected obligations resulted in five factors. The first dimension is named *loyalty*. This scale (three items) assesses the degree to which the employer can expect from the employee to act loyal towards the employing organization ($\alpha = .76$). The second scale, *open attitude* (four items), measures the extent to which the employer can expect from the employee to be clear and open with regard to all aspects affecting the employment relationship ($\alpha = .79$). *Personal investment* is the third factor. This scale (five items) measures the extent to which the employer can expect a high level of personal investment in the organization ($\alpha = .85$). The fourth factor is named *flexibility*. This five-item scale refers to the extent to which the employer can expect from the employee to adopt a flexible and tolerant attitude towards internal organizational changes ($\alpha = .85$). The last dimension is named *respect for authority* (four items). This scale measures the extent to which the employer can expect from the employee to show respect for higher authorities within the organization.

Individual characteristics. These variables included age (in years), seniority (in years), level of education, employability and trade union membership (0 = non member; 1 = member). Three educational levels are distinguished: lower (education until the age of 15), average (comparable to high school certification in the US) and high (comparable to bachelor and master levels). Employability was measured on the basis of four items referring to the perceived strength of one's position on the labor market (Pollet, De Witte & Van Hootegeem, 1998).

Job characteristics. Two job characteristics were used: the hierarchical level of the job and the pay level of the job. All respondents were asked to indicate on which of the following hierarchical levels their job is situated: senior management, middle management, professional or operational. Three pay levels were distinguished: less than 1,240 Euro, between 1,240 and 1,980 Euro, 1,980 Euro or more (net monthly salary).

Formal contract characteristics. As already stated, there are several types of 'formal contracts' in Belgium: the blue-collar worker contract, the white-collar worker contract, the executive level contract and the civil servant statute. Respondents were asked to indicate to which of these four categories they belong.

Organizational characteristics. We included two organizational characteristics: 1) the size of the organization (small or 10 to 49 employees; medium-sized or 50-499 employees and large or 500 or more) and 2) the sector of activity (manufacturing, commercial services, public and non-profit services).

Analysis

For the construction of a typology of psychological contracts, a cluster analysis was employed. We used the k-means clustering procedure in SPSS, a hierarchical clustering method that uses euclidean distances. We chose Ward's method because this minimizes the variation in each cluster and seeks to find clusters of equal size. Ward's method is also considered to be the most robust method (Aldenderfer & Blashfield, 1984). Since the number of clusters was difficult to deduce from the dendrogram, we carried out a number of different cluster analyses, varying the number of clusters from 2 to 12. The solution with 6 clusters was chosen because of the clearly different pattern of the 10 dimensions and the high number of respondents allocated to one of the six clusters (1,049 of the 1,106). To check the significance of the differences, we used analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post hoc analyses which were carried out on the basis of a Bonferroni test ($p < .05$).

In a second stage we profiled each of the six clusters in terms of the above-mentioned individual, job, formal contract and organizational characteristics. For each cluster we calculated the average values or the frequency distributions. On the basis of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) or Chi-square tests (X^2), we ascertained whether the six clusters demonstrate significant differences in terms of the characteristics that we were studying. Post-hoc analyses were carried out on the basis of a Bonferroni test ($p < .05$).

RESULTS

6-Cluster Solution: 6 Types of Psychological Contracts

The cluster analysis showed a 6-cluster solution, with 4 clusters being 'large' (containing 203 till 241 respondents), 1 cluster being 'medium' (151 respondents) and 1 cluster being

'small' (44 respondents). For each cluster, the average scores and standard deviations on the 10 dimensions are shown in Table 1.

Concerning their expected entitlements, respondents in cluster 1 have average scores on all dimensions, except for equal treatment on which they score high. Regarding their expected obligations, their scores also approximate the average, except those on personal investment and flexibility. These scores are far below average. In other words, the employees have high expectations from their employer, but they perceive themselves as having low obligations toward their employer. Therefore, we call this type of psychological contract an *'instrumental' psychological contract*.

The respondents in cluster 2 have low scores on all dimensions, both concerning their expected entitlements and their expected obligations. On most dimensions they actually have the lowest score of the six clusters, namely on tangibility, personal treatment, carefulness regarding arrangements, equal treatment and open attitude. Due to the low scores on all dimensions we call their psychological contract a *'weak' psychological contract*.

The respondents in cluster 3 score very high on the dimensions of equal treatment and long-term involvement. They have average scores on the other entitlement dimensions: tangibility, personal treatment and carefulness regarding arrangements. Concerning the obligation dimensions, they have a very high score on loyalty and a very low score on personal investment. They have average scores on open attitude, flexibility and respect for authority. Since the emphasis in this type of psychological contract is on long-term involvement in exchange for loyalty, we call this type a *'loyal' psychological contract*.

The respondents in cluster 4 score high on all dimensions, on both expected entitlements and expected obligations. Except for their score on personal investment, the respondents in this cluster actually have the highest score of the six clusters on all dimensions. Due to the high scores on all dimensions we call their contract a *'strong' psychological contract*.

Concerning their expected entitlements, respondents in cluster 5 have low scores on all dimensions, but particularly very low scores on long-term involvement. With regard to the obligation dimensions, they also have low scores on most of them, but particularly on loyalty. They have however rather high scores on personal investment. Due to the emphasis on low expectations concerning long-term involvement in exchange for little loyalty, we call this type a *'unattached' psychological contract*.

TABLE 1
6-Cluster Solution: Means and Standard Deviations on 10 Psychological Contract Dimensions

Psychological Contract Dimensions	CI 1 (N=205;19.5 %)	CI 2 (N=203;19.5 %)	CI 3 (N=205;19.5 %)	CI 4 (N=241;23 %)	CI 5 (N=44;4 %)	CI 6 (N=151;14.5 %)	Total respondents (N=1049;100 %)
Entitlements	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)
Long-Term Involvement	4.10 (.46)	3.82 (.54)	4.73 (.30)	4.80 (.25)	2.97 (.64)	4.25 (.57)	4.30* (.64) 3,4>6>1>2>5
Tangibility	3.94 (.48)	3.50 (.63)	4.18 (.62)	4.54 (.52)	3.60 (.70)	3.90 (.63)	4.02* (.68) 4>3>1,6>2,5
Personal Treatment	4.41 (.47)	3.89 (.53)	4.55 (.42)	4.87 (.24)	4.16 (.54)	4.60 (.38)	4.46* (.54) 4>3,6>1>5>2
Carefulness regarding Arrangements	3.93 (.49)	3.47 (.54)	4.28 (.53)	4.48 (.63)	3.48 (.51)	4.17 (.63)	4.05* (.67) 4>3,6>1>2,5
Equal Treatment	4.54 (.46)	3.71 (.62)	4.62 (.49)	4.67 (.55)	3.83 (.81)	4.55 (.47)	4.40* (.65) 1,3,4,6>2,5
Obligations	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)	\bar{X} (SD)
Loyalty	3.63 (.66)	3.83 (.56)	4.80 (.29)	4.82 (.30)	2.42 (.56)	4.25 (.62)	4.21* (.79) 3,4>6>2>1>5
Open Attitude	4.18 (.44)	3.88 (.46)	4.35 (.51)	4.90 (.20)	4.11 (.42)	4.44 (.44)	4.35* (.54) 4>3,6>1,5>2
Personal Investment	3.22 (.69)	3.47 (.71)	3.25 (.68)	4.50 (.49)	4.02 (.63)	4.53 (.46)	3.79* (.85) 4,6>5>2>1,3
Flexibility	3.75 (.51)	3.86 (.45)	4.01 (.62)	4.71 (.38)	4.09 (.55)	4.49 (.43)	4.16* (.61) 4>6>3,5>1,2
Respect for Authority	3.94 (.50)	3.63 (.55)	4.09 (.63)	4.61 (.50)	3.55 (.69)	4.29 (.50)	4.10* (.65) 4>6>1,3>2,5

*p F(ANOVA) < .05

The respondents in cluster 6, finally, have average scores on all entitlement dimensions, except for equal treatment on which they score high. Regarding their expected obligations, they also score average, except on personal investment and flexibility on which they score far above average. In other words, the employees have moderate expectations from their employer, while they perceive themselves as having high obligations toward their employer. Therefore, we call this type of psychological contract an '*investing*' *psychological contract*.

Profiles of the Respondents in the 6 Clusters

In order to further characterize the clusters, we studied the profiles of the respondents in the 6 clusters. The results are shown in Table 2. To discuss the differences between the profiles as nuanced as possible, we start with the cluster having the most pronounced profile followed by clusters that are related but different. This implies the following order: the loyal psychological contract, followed by the instrumental and weak psychological contract; and the unattached psychological contract followed by the investing and strong psychological contract.

Loyal psychological contract. The respondents with a loyal psychological contract (cluster 3) have the lowest level of education and employability. 31.8% of the respondents received their highest degree of schooling at the age of 15 or lower. Only 23.4% have a high educational degree, compared to the average of 40.4%. They perceive their employability as the weakest of the six clusters (3.27 versus the average of 3.55). A large percentage is member of a trade union: 66.2% as compared with an average of 51.3%. Employees with a loyal psychological contract have mainly operational jobs (83.9% versus the average of 68.3%), to a much lesser extent professional or management jobs. Their net monthly salary is in the lowest pay category: 68.5% earn less than Euro 1,240 net per month. Only 4.7% earn Euro 1,980 or more net per month. They are mainly blue-collar workers (41% versus the average of 29%) or civil servants (23% versus the average of 18%). Relatively fewer are white-collar employees and hardly any of them function at the executive level. Relatively more of them are employed in large organizations of more than 500 employees (56.4% versus the average of 50.8%). The profile of the employees with a loyal psychological contract can be summarized as that of a very loyal, poorly educated blue-collar worker or civil servant who has very few opportunities in the labor market and is a member of a trade union. They have an operational job in a large company and receive the lowest pay.

TABLE 2
Profile of the Respondents in the Six Clusters

Characteristics		Cl 1	Cl 2	Cl 3	Cl 4	Cl 5	Cl 6	All Respondents
Age (in years)	\bar{X}	36.1	37.4	38.3	41.5	31.2	37.8	38.1* 4>1,2,3,6>5
Seniority (in years)	\bar{X}	10.7	10.3	13.5	15.3	4.8	10.7	12* 1,2,3,4,6>5 3>1,2 4>1,2,6
Level of Education								
Low		25.2%	19.6%	31.8%	22.3%	4.7%	10%	21.7%*
Average		42.6%	36.2%	44.8%	38.2%	14%	31.3%	37.9%*
High		32.2%	44.2%	23.4%	39.5%	81.4%	58.7%	40.4%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Employability	\bar{X}	3.63	3.61	3.27	3.50	4.25	3.62	3.55* 5>1,2,3,4,6 1,2>3
Trade Union Membership		56.6%	48.8%	66.2%	51.3%	31.8%	33.3%	51.3%*
Hierarchical Level								
Senior management		1.9%	4.4%	1.5%	8.3%	15.9%	13.2%	6%*
Middle management		14.6%	15.8%	7.8%	20.8%	18.2%	13.9%	15%*
Professional		8.3%	12.3%	6.8%	10.8%	25%	13.2%	10.8%*
Operational		75.2%	67.5%	83.9%	60%	41%	59.6%	68.3%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Net Salary								
< 1,240 Euro		63.9%	58.6%	68.5%	48.5%	45.2%	43.5%	56.6%*
1,240-1,980 Euro		27.7%	32.3%	26.8%	34%	38.1%	38.6%	31.8%*
1,980 Euro and more		8.4%	9.1%	4.7%	17.5%	16.7%	17.9%	11.6%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Formal Contract								
Blue-collar worker		37.5%	28%	41%	24%	11%	17%	29%*
White-collar worker		36%	31%	28%	32%	46%	34%	33%*
Executive level		14.5%	23%	8%	22%	36%	30%	20%*
Civil servant		12%	18%	23%	22%	7%	19%	18%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sector								
Industry		31%	27.1%	30.9%	30.8%	15.9%	24.5%	28.6%*
Commercial services		34%	33.5%	30.4%	32.9%	61.4%	36.4%	34.4%*
Public and non-profit services		35%	39.4%	38.7%	36.3%	22.7%	39.1%	36.9%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Size of the Organization								
10-49 employees		22.5%	21.2%	12.2%	17.8%	27.2%	32.7%	20.8%*
50-499 employees		34.8%	26.1%	31.4%	24.9%	36.4%	22%	28.4%*
500 employees and more		42.7%	52.7%	56.4%	57.3%	36.4%	45.3%	50.8%*
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*p F(ANOVA) < .05; *p X²(Pearson, Chi-square) < .05

Instrumental psychological contract. Respondents with an instrumental psychological contract (cluster 1) have a low level of education, but not as low as those with a loyal psychological contract. Unlike employees with a loyal psychological contract they perceive their employability as reasonable (3.63 versus the average of 3.55). A large percentage is member of a trade union: 56.6% as compared with an average of 51.3%. Like employees with a loyal psychological contract, they mainly have operational jobs (75.2% versus the average of 68.3%). Their net monthly salary is in the lower pay categories, but not in the lowest pay category as employees with a loyal psychological contract: 63.9% earn less than Euro 1,240 net per month. Only 8.4% earn Euro 1,980 or more net per month. Employees with an instrumental psychological contract are mainly blue-collar workers (37.5% versus the average of 29.3%) or white-collar workers (36% versus the average of 33%). Relatively fewer are executive level employees (14.5% versus the average of 20%) or civil servants (12% versus the average of 18%). They are more employed in medium-sized organizations (34.8% versus the average of 28.4%). The profile of the employees with an instrumental psychological contract can be summarized as that of a poorly educated blue-collar or white-collar worker who has reasonable opportunities in the labor market and is a member of a trade union. They have an operational job in a medium-sized company and receive low pay.

Weak psychological contract. Unlike the respondents with an instrumental or loyal psychological contract, respondents with a weak psychological contract have an average rather than a low level of education. They also perceive themselves as having a reasonable employability. 48.8% of them are members of a trade union. This percentage is close to the average (51%) but is significantly lower than the percentage of trade union members among employees with a loyal or instrumental psychological contract. Unlike employees with a loyal or instrumental psychological contract, whose jobs are mainly operational, employees with a weak psychological contract have jobs at all hierarchical levels. The distribution of their net monthly salary across the various pay categories follows the average distribution. In other words, the overall profile of the employees with a weak psychological contract is not very pronounced, having average scores on the characteristics.

Unattached psychological contract. Respondents with an unattached psychological contract are young (31 versus the average of 38.1 years) and have low seniority (4.8 versus the average of 12 years). They are the most educated employees of all six clusters: 81.4% have a high educational degree, compared to the average of 40.4%.

They perceive themselves as being highly employable (4.25 versus the average of 3.55). Only a small percentage of them is member of a trade union: 31.8% versus the average of 51.3%. Employees with an unattached psychological contract fulfill senior management jobs (15.9% versus the average of 6%), professional jobs (25% versus the average of 10.8%), and middle management jobs (18.2% versus the average of 15%). Their net monthly salary is in the higher pay category: only 45.2% earn less than Euro 1,240 net per month (as compared with 56.6% on average). Employees with an unattached psychological contract are mainly white-collar workers (46% versus the average of 33%) or executive employees (36% versus the average of 20%). They are employed in the commercial services (61.4% as compared with 34.4%) and in small and medium-sized organizations (resp. 27.2% and 36.4% versus the average of 20.8% and 28.4%). The profile of employees with an unattached psychological contract can be summarized as that of a young, highly educated white-collar or executive employee, having a very strong labor market position. They have a professional or senior management job in a small or medium-sized company in the tertiary sector and are being highly paid.

Investing psychological contract. Respondents with an investing psychological contract (cluster 6) have a high level of education, but not quite as high as that of employees with an unattached psychological contract (58.7% versus the average of 40.4%). Their perceived employability is close to average (3.62 versus the average of 3.55). Like employees with an unattached psychological contract, only a small percentage is member of a trade union: 33.3% as compared with 51.3% on average. Relatively speaking they have more senior management jobs (13.2% versus the average of 6%) and relatively less operational jobs (59.6% versus the average of 68.3%). Their net monthly salary is in the highest pay category: 17.9% earn Euro 1,980 or more net per month (versus the average of 11.6%). They are mainly executive employees (30% versus the average of 20%) and less blue-collar workers (17% versus the average of 29%). Employees with an investing psychological contract are relatively more employed in small organizations (32.7% as compared with 20.8% on average). The profile of employees with an investing psychological contract can be summarized as that of a highly educated executive employee who has a senior management job and receives the highest pay. They generally are employed by a small company.

Strong psychological contract. Respondents with a strong psychological contract (cluster 4) are somewhat older than respondents in the other clusters (41.5 versus the average of 38.1 years). Their seniority with their employer is also higher than that of all

other respondents (15.3 versus the average of 12 years). Like employees with a weak psychological contract, they have an average level of education. Their perceived employability is close to average (3.50 versus the average of 3.55). Employees with a strong psychological contract have relatively more middle management jobs (20.8% versus the average of 15%), and relatively less operational jobs (60% versus the average of 68.3%). Their net monthly salary is in the higher wage categories: 17.5% earn Euro 1,980 or more net per month (as compared with 11.6% on average). Relatively more of them are civil servants (22% versus the average of 18%) and relatively fewer are blue-collar workers (24% versus the average of 29%). Employees with a strong psychological contract are more employed in large organizations: 57.3% as compared to 50.8% on average. The profile of employees with a strong psychological contract can be summarized as that of an older civil servant who has a middle management job and receives a high salary.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The cluster analysis on 10 dimensions of psychological contracts showed six clusters, all having different patterns of mutual expectations or, in other words, all have their own type of psychological contract. Interpreting the different types, we categorize the six clusters as 3 x 2 'opposite' types (see Table 3).

The loyal psychological contract can be considered the opposite of the unattached psychological contract. Employees with a loyal psychological contract show high expectations towards their employer, especially in terms of long-term involvement. In exchange, their employer can expect a lot from them, especially a high level of loyalty but no personal investment. In contrast, employees with an unattached psychological contract show low expectations towards their employer, especially in terms of long-term involvement. Their employers can expect little from them in return, especially very little loyalty, but they can expect personal investment.

The instrumental psychological contract can be contrasted with the investing psychological contract. Employees in both types have the same expectations of their employer, while what the employer can expect from them is opposite. In both types, employees expect long-term involvement, tangibility, personal treatment, carefulness regarding arrangements, and especially equal treatment. In the instrumental psychological contract, the employer cannot expect much from the employee in return, especially with regard to personal investment and flexibility. In contrast, in the investing psychological

contract, the employer can expect a lot in return, especially a high level of personal investment and flexibility.

Finally, the weak psychological contrast can be contrasted with the strong psychological contract. While in the weak contract, employees expect little from their employer and the employer can also expect little in return, employees with a strong psychological contract expect a lot from their employer and the employer can also expect a lot from them in return.

Interpreting these 3x2 types of psychological contracts in terms of employee groups with a so-called weak versus strong position in society, we can categorize three types of psychological contrast as weak and three types as strong. The profiles of loyal, instrumental and weak psychological contracts tend to refer to employee groups with a weak position in society. In contrast, the profiles of unattached, investing and strong psychological contract tend to refer to employee groups with a strong position in society.

The distribution shows that nearly 60% of the active working population is assigned to one of the types of the weak society. A second important observation is that the unattached psychological contract is attributed to merely 4% of all employees. Nevertheless, the 'unattached' is precisely the type of psychological contract that resembles Hiltrop's 'new contract' (Hiltrop, 1995). We must conclude that, at least for the Belgian labor market, the so-called transformation from traditional employment relationships towards 'new deals' (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995), protean (Hall, 1996) or boundaryless careers (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994) is restricted to a very small group of young and highly educated professionals and managers.

The observed diversity of types of psychological contracts and the predominance of more traditional profiles point at the importance of a reorientation towards research based upon large, representative samples, covering all hierarchical layers and all relevant sub-populations. Most research into the transformation of the employment relationship is based on surveys among small and selective samples (e.g. employees of fast growing organizations in the new service industries, MBA students or alumni, professional groups such as consultants, etc.). This selectiveness might lead us to a misrepresentation of the directions and speed of changes in psychological and social contracts.

TABLE 3
Profiles of the Six Psychological Contract Types and their Strong or Weak Position in Society

	Weak Position in Society	Strong Position in Society
Contrast 1:	Loyal Psychological Contract (19.5%)	Unattached Psychological Contract (4%)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average age ▪ High seniority ▪ Lowest level of education ▪ Very weak employability ▪ Highest degree of trade union membership ▪ Lowest wage category ▪ Operational job ▪ Blue-collar worker or civil servant ▪ Active in all sectors ▪ Large organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young ▪ Very low seniority ▪ Highest level of education ▪ Very strong employability ▪ Lowest degree of trade union membership ▪ Higher wage category ▪ Professional or senior management job ▪ White-collar worker or executive level ▪ Mainly active in commercial services ▪ Small and medium-sized organizations
Contrast 2:	Instrumental Psychological Contract (19.5%)	Investing Psychological Contract (14.5%)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average age ▪ Average seniority ▪ Low level of education ▪ Average employability ▪ High degree of trade union membership ▪ Lower wage category ▪ Operational job ▪ Blue-collar or white-collar worker ▪ Active in all sectors ▪ Medium-sized organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average age ▪ Average seniority ▪ High level of education ▪ Average employability ▪ Low degree of trade union membership ▪ Highest wage category ▪ Senior management job ▪ Executive level ▪ Active in all sectors ▪ Small organizations
Contrast 3:	Weak Psychological Contract (19.5%)	Strong Psychological Contract (23%)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average age ▪ Average seniority ▪ Average level of education ▪ Average employability ▪ Average degree of trade union membership ▪ All wage categories ▪ Jobs at all hierarchical levels ▪ All formal contracts ▪ Active in all sectors ▪ All sizes of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Older ▪ High seniority ▪ Average level of education ▪ Average employability ▪ Average degree of trade union membership ▪ Higher wage category ▪ Middle management job ▪ Civil servant ▪ Active in all sectors ▪ Large organizations

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